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New York

President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda items 11 and 40 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/57/2 and A/57/2/Corr.1)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of my country, I would like to begin by expressing our solidarity with the Government and people of Indonesia and with the family members of the victims of the terrorist act that took place this past weekend. This was an event of great seriousness that will likely attract the attention of the United Nations as it discharges its responsibility in the area of international peace and security.

The joint consideration of these two agenda items is not only appropriate, it is also particularly important to relations between the Security Council and the General Assembly. At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Council, the Ambassador of Cameroon, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council. We would also like to emphasize the fact that this debate is taking place at a very important time, given the successful effort of the Security Council to adopt a new report to the General Assembly on its activities that is more flexible, shorter, more pertinent and, so far as possible, more analytical. That effort was justified in that it promoted greater transparency in the work of the Council; underscored the special responsibility of the members of the Council towards the Assembly, which has been referred to as accountability; and contributed to better functioning of a body whose composition and working methods are often questioned. The changes made in the report were the result of persistent efforts made mainly by the elected members of the Council, namely, those members whom the Assembly has entrusted to represent it.

The criticisms made concerning the format of the report routinely sent to the Assembly were always justified and reasonable. Much of that criticism was expressed in meetings such as the ones taking place during these two days. It has therefore been very satisfying for Colombia, which will very soon conclude its term of office in the Council, to have taken part in this common exercise. We would like to emphasize the role played by Singapore and other members who always demonstrated keen interest in the subject. Among the permanent members, a special tribute should be paid to the United Kingdom, which has shown great willingness to consider reforms in the working methods of the Council in a constructive spirit.

As we have said in the Council, the adoption of the new report is a lesson to the members of this

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principal organ, whether permanent or elected, that these things can be done without disrupting the political situation. It is also a lesson for the Secretariat, which at the beginning expressed doubt, saying that it was very uncomfortable about such an exercise.

However, we can only be pleased with the new report when it achieves the only thing that is truly of importance; that is, when it shows that it has contributed in a better way to a situation whereby the members of the General Assembly and members of the international community are enabled to critically observe the work of the Security Council. The report in its new form must now contribute to this new critical vision, promote a more informed debate and make it possible for members of the Council to work in such a way that the rest of the membership of the United Nations can examine its work more constructively.

However, all we can say thus far is that the changes have been of limited effectiveness. That is why it would be very useful to continue making reforms when possible — reforms based on suggestions and proposals that are set forth in debates like the one being held today, as well as on the renewed commitment and solidarity of the voice of the General Assembly in the Council.

When considering the last report in relation to other innovations, we believe that the proposal by the Secretary-General in document A/57/387 on the codification of changes that have taken place as working methods is very appropriate. This exercise makes political sense and would be a major contribution to transparency without damaging the provisional rules of procedure.

During the period covered by the report, the Security Council has been faced with many challenges. There has been the collapse of the Taliban regime and the installation of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan; measures have had to be taken against international terrorism in the Security Council Committee established by resolution 1267 (1999), presided over by Colombia, and the Counter-Terrorism Committee, presided over by the United Kingdom. There have also been changes to the presence of the United Nations in East Timor following its independence; the impasse in the conflict in Angola has moved forward after the death of Jonas Savimbi, and there are now new efforts to bring about peace in that country; and there have been presidential elections in Sierra Leone, with the participation of the Revolutionary United Front as a political party. I would like to point out the first positive signs regarding general political agreements and the beginning of the withdrawal, which must be final, of foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Finally, I want to highlight the decision of the committee on borders between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the situation regarding security in Somalia and the possibility for a process of reconciliation.

Perhaps it may be too early to give a critical and wise assessment of these actions, but in all the cases that I have mentioned, the success or failure of the Council will depend largely on the motivation that it has in the coming months and years. There must be a real commitment in the Security Council to defend collective interest, and overcome the temptation to act in exclusive ways favouring only national interests or lesser goals.

I will conclude with a few comments regarding the reform of Security Council. The progress that has been made in Cluster II can lead to a more realistic debate on this topic. It is recognized that the expansion of the Council continues to be a contentious issue. But if you, Sir, encourage the members of the Council to hold a dialogue on more realistic goals, perhaps we may be able to agree on an expansion for the non-permanent members. This could be accompanied by an intensification of efforts in favour of constructive reforms in working methods which should be consistent with the overall approach taken to the subject as described in the Millennium Declaration.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): Allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to express our heart-felt condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia and to the families of the victims of the explosion that took place in Bali. Our deepest sympathies also go to all the countries whose nationals were victims of this tragic event.

The consideration of this item this year is different in many respects. First, the format of the report of the Security Council has been reconfigured in response to the views expressed and suggestions made by Member States. Secondly, the two reports have been clustered together for a joint debate, which brings harmony and logic to our consideration of these two very pertinent issues. Lastly, and perhaps even most important, this joint debate is taking place at a time

when a cloud of war hangs over our heads, and when action or inaction in the Security Council could make the difference between war and peace.

It is the hope of my delegation therefore that the Security Council will indeed take into account the views that will be expressed over the next two days. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain for their election to the Council.

For nine years, the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and other Matters Related to the Security Council has been deliberating on how to make the Council democratic, representative and responsive to the needs of all Members of the United Nations.

The question needs not be asked as to how much progress has been achieved from one General Assembly session to another. It has become ritualistic for preceding Assembly sessions to take note of the report of the Working Group, welcome progress made and decide that the succeeding General Assembly session would continue consideration of Security Council reform through this Working Group.

During the second session of the Working Group, discussion with Council members stressed progress in the work of the Council on its reforms. Indeed, some steps have been taken with regard to the working methods of the Security Council. These include improvements in the Arria formula, meetings with troop-contributing countries and other countries contributing to peace-keeping operations, briefings by the President of the Security Council to non-Council members, availability of draft resolutions and summaries of meetings and informal consultations of the whole.

These are all welcomed measures adding value to the Security Council reform process. However, they do not address the core of the problem: the imbalanced decision-making process of the Security Council. What developing countries need is their democratic right to participate in decision-making on issues of international peace and security.

Let me recall that General Assembly resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993, among other things, recognized in its fifth preambular paragraph,

> "the need to review the membership of the Security Council and related matters in view of the substantial increase in the membership of the United Nations, especially of developing countries, as well as the changes in international relations".

The resolution refers to the increase in the number of developing countries, which constitute the overwhelming majority of the Organization's membership. It cites changes in international relations because those changes make up the agenda of the Security Council and, almost without exception, either affect or happen mostly in developing countries, especially in Africa. So it is logical that developing countries call for appropriate representation on the Security Council. In that context, Namibia stands by the decision of the African Union that Africa deserves two permanent and five non-permanent seats on the Council. Africa's decision that the two permanent seats for Africa will be filled on a rotational basis demonstrates the collective, representative and democratic spirit in which Africa is pursuing this vital issue.

Security Council resolution 1234 (1999) affirms, inter alia, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Democratic Republic of Congo and calls for the withdrawal of uninvited forces from the territory of that country. We welcome the latest developments in that regard. We applaud the recommendation of the Secretary-General to increase the personnel of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and we call on the Council to implement that recommendation. We look forward to the report of the Council on the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and express our desire to see the Council take appropriate action so that those resources can benefit the rightful owners — the people of the country.

On Angola, we note the agreement in the Council to review the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Angola. It is our hope that all required assistance will be made available to assist the Angolan people in the consolidation of peace. In that context, we call on the international community to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need in Angola.

The successful elections held in Sierra Leone are only the beginning of the consolidation of peace-

building. The situation around Sierra Leone calls for the continued presence of the United Nations and the engagement of the international community in that country.

On 27 September 2002, we finally and joyfully welcomed the sovereign and independent State of Timor-Leste to the community of nations. We congratulate the people of that country for that noble achievement. The President of Timor-Leste, in his address during the admission of his country, paid tribute to the United Nations and the international community at large for having assisted the people of Timor-Leste in realizing their right to self-determination.

He further went on to say that the people of Western Sahara also deserve their right to self-determination. Therefore, the fundamental question we have to ask ourselves is what did the Security Council, in particular, do in the case of Timor-Leste which it needs to do in the case of Western Sahara? Is the international community showing the same resolve on the implementation of the United Nations Settlement Plan for Western Sahara and the right to self-determination of the Saharan people?

Let me point out that in the report of the Security Council under discussion, Western Sahara is referred to only in the introduction and is entirely omitted from the activities relating to all questions considered by the Security Council under its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We ask that this serious omission be rectified. Namibia calls on the Council to see to it that the United Nations Settlement Plan for Western Sahara is implemented. The Secretary-General should therefore continue to work towards that end.

The report of the Security Council rightly points out that the Council broke new ground with the Counter-Terrorism Committee in the degree to which it has engaged in cooperation with every Member State in the follow-up to Council resolution 1373 (2001), including help to Member States seeking technical and financial assistance. We underscore the need for the Security Council to follow through, among other things, with providing assistance to developing countries in the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001).

Namibia firmly believes that all Security Council resolutions must be implemented by the relevant parties, failing which the Council and, indeed, the entire Organization loses credibility. But when the Security Council unanimously adopts four resolutions on the Middle East during the period under review and none of them see implementation, what message does this send to the parties, and especially to the Palestinian people, whose only hope rests in the implementation of the Council resolutions? The Council must do all it can to help bring about peace in the Middle East.

On Iraq, the report of the Security Council states, inter alia, that the Secretary-General's dialogue with Iraq was renewed and that members of the Council were supportive of that process. My delegation sees merit in that process and urges its continuation.

In its efforts to make the work of the United Nations more transparent, the general membership has had opportunities to make their views heard before the consideration of Council resolutions. That was certainly the case with Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, and the presidential statement on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, to mention but a few. Security Council resolutions are binding on all Member States. Decisions in the Council are taken by a few in the name of all Members of the Organization. It is only logical, therefore, that the Council hears the views and opinions of the larger membership before it adopts resolutions, especially those under Chapter VII of the Charter, which are enforceable.

The democratization and enlargement of the Security Council should be seen as an integral part of the overall reform of the United Nations. Hence, we cannot open up the rest of the United Nations system and leave the Security Council intact. The indefinite deferral of the enlargement and democratization of the Security Council will amount to the gradual erosion of its prestige.

Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria): Allow me, through you, Sir, to extend the sympathy of my delegation to the people of Indonesia for the tragic events that took place in that country very recently.

I wish to express our appreciation to the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Cameroon, for introducing the report of the Council to the General Assembly. I also take this opportunity to congratulate Spain, Germany, Pakistan,

Chile and Angola on their election as non-permanent members of the Council for 2003 and 2004.

The report of the Security Council provides an invaluable insight into the activities the Council undertook last year. According to the report, the Council held 192 formal meetings, comprising 159 public and 33 private meetings. Eleven "Arria formula" meetings were also held with representatives of non-governmental organizations, academia and the media. The Council adopted 73 resolutions and issued 45 presidential statements. Furthermore, the Council held consultations of the whole, considered numerous reports of the Secretary-General and reviewed and processed documents and communications from States and regional and intergovernmental organizations.

The report, which highlighted such issues as the maintenance of international peace and security and the working methods of the Security Council, represents the effort of the Council to make itself accountable to the membership of the United Nations, in accordance with the provisions of Article 24 of the Charter.

Nigeria is encouraged by the fact that the Council has begun to respond positively to the demand that the report be more analytical, concise and easy to read. There has been a significant reduction in the size of the report, and more statistical information is provided. The introduction, which summarizes activities of the Council as they relate to specific conflict areas of the world, is welcome, as it makes the report easy to read and the information easy to access. We commend this new format and urge that more improvement be made as the work of the Council progresses.

My delegation would like to address the following specific headings in the report.

First, there is the issue of the maintenance of international peace and security. The issue of conflicts and the maintenance of international peace and security continue to pose enormous challenges to the Security Council. We note that, while the Council has succeeded in making progress in the resolution of some conflicts, as reflected in the noticeable increase in the number of peace agreements, the Council, in conjunction with the international community, still needs to do more to make the world a peaceful place in which to live. In this regard, Nigeria endorses the involvement of the wider society, including subregional and regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions and developmental agencies, in the process of conflict prevention, management and resolution. Their collective contributions no doubt substantially help in the reduction of socio-political and economic pressures, the diffusion of which often leads to violent conflict or, sometimes, war.

On the subject of Sierra Leone, we note the progress made since the conclusion of democratic elections in that country. We support the Security Council's Adjustment Withdrawal Plan and hope that caution will be applied in the implementation to ensure that the security of the country is not impacted negatively.

We call on the Council to assist in the completion of the integration of ex-combatants. Assistance should also be extended to the training of Sierra Leone's police and army, which would be totally responsible for maintaining security in the country following the withdrawal of United Nations troops. The Sierra Leone Government should further be assisted to establish an effective civilian administration and political institutions, particularly the courts, that will ensure practical implementation of the rule of law.

Nigeria endorses the Security Council's efforts in addressing a complex humanitarian political and security situation in the Mano River Union States. However, we call for a comprehensive security arrangement for the entire Mano River Union, instead of the current ad hoc strategy. We commend the Security Council's visit to the area last year and urge that the momentum be sustained, given the rather fluid political situation in the area.

We commend the Security Council for facilitating the peace process in Angola and welcome the establishment of an enhanced United Nations mission, as this will strengthen the urgently needed assistance in the peace-building, demobilization and quartering programme.

As regards the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria remains committed to the support of the Security Council to accomplish its current mandate in that country. We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation on the expansion of the mandate. We commend Council assistance in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation programme and urge troop-contributing countries to provide troops, personnel and equipment for the much-needed Air Field Services Unit. Nigeria will continue

to support the inter-Congolese dialogue, which we hope will lead to a durable peace and crystallize into formation of an all-inclusive Government.

The Security Council and the international community should support the South African-led peace process in Burundi. Meanwhile, we call on the parties to give peace a chance and observe a ceasefire to ensure effective international support in resolving the conflict.

On the subject of terrorism, Nigeria notes the Security Council's prompt response to the threat of terrorism after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States of America, with the adoption of resolution 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001), which condemned the attacks and established the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC). The CTC has effectively galvanized an international coalition against terrorism, and this has proved the determination of the Council to live up to its Charter obligation for the maintenance of international peace and security. We remain committed to the global effort to combat international terrorism in all its ramifications.

In terms of working methods and the briefing of troop-contributing countries, Nigeria commends the regular briefings by the Security Council to non-members of the Council, as well as the briefing of Chairmen of Regional Groups. We note the regularity of these meetings and consultations with troop-contributing countries, especially the recently introduced system of briefing troop-contributing countries before the report of the Secretary-General on a mission is presented to the Council. We consider this practice a welcome development, as it enables the troop-contributing countries to express their views and offer ideas and suggestions for the overall improvement of the peacekeeping mandate. As a major troop-contributing country, Nigeria believes that the continuation of this process of consultation by the Security Council will eliminate friction and facilitate effective peacekeeping operations in the field.

We urge that the monthly wrap-up meetings of the Council remain as informal and interactive as possible. We support these meetings, as they provide Member States the opportunity to exchange views with the Council and enable them to benefit from lessons learned by all sides.

We note that the Security Council undertook a number of ad hoc missions to some conflict locations during the period under review. Nigeria appreciates and endorses this strategy. It is our belief that such missions will enhance the ability of the Council to assess situations on the ground and to anticipate, prevent as well as respond adequately to such situations. However, we would still urge that officials of subregional and regional organizations be invited to participate in such missions. Furthermore, the Council should endeavour to consult more with subregional and regional organizations before missions are undertaken. In this regard, Nigeria commends the Council's missions to West Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes. We urge that more such trips be undertaken, as the missions could be morale-boosting and also capable of encouraging good governance in those countries.

Nigeria reaffirms its support for the thematic debates in the Council on such issues as the prevention of armed conflict, HIV/AIDS and international peacekeeping, gender and peacekeeping, and civilians in armed conflict. These debates have always provided opportunities for the Council and Member States to focus on related issues with a view to finding appropriate solutions. We hope that such efforts will be sustained.

We recall that, at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Millennium Declaration reaffirmed faith in the United Nations and its Charter as an indispensable foundation of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. It further resolved to intensify efforts towards achieving a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. Nigeria therefore reiterates its support for the Declaration. We also believe that the Security Council needs to reflect the realities of the twenty-first century in order to better serve the interests of our Organization and its Charter, especially in the maintenance of international peace and security. Nigeria will therefore continue to support the increase in the membership of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, in line with the position of the African Union, which calls for at least two permanent seats for Africa in an enlarged Security Council.

In conclusion, Nigeria pledges its support for the efforts of the Security Council to make itself more responsive to global challenges and the yearnings of

Member States, and reiterates its determination to encourage the Council as it continues to improve its work methods and discharges its responsibility justly in the maintenance of international peace and security and in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Kerim (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): In light of current circumstances, our discussion on the report of the Security Council for the period June 2001 to July 2002 presents us with a unique task. As we review its report, we see that the Security Council is confronted with an issue, the situation in Iraq, which requires urgent and effective action that is in full compliance with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

As Secretary-General Annan rightly pointed out in his address to the General Assembly on 12 September:

> "I urge Iraq to comply with its obligations, for the sake of its own people and for the sake of world order. If Iraq's defiance continues, the Security Council must face its responsibilities." (*A/57/PV.2, p. 3*)

Eventually, making the Security Council relevant to the critical issues of the day is the most appropriate way to elevate its significance, stature and authority.

We look forward to the open Security Council debate on Iraq, which has been scheduled for later this week on the initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement. No doubt, such a debate is necessary and useful. For the sake of strengthening the authority of the United Nations and acting in the spirit of multilateralism, the Republic of Macedonia would find it appropriate for the Security Council to adopt a resolution on Iraq that would send a strong and clear signal.

From our point of view, the Security Council has submitted a concise and sound report. In addition to this general assessment, allow me to make a few comments on some of the issues contained and elaborated on in the report.

We have noted with satisfaction improvements in the working methods of the Council, particularly an increasing degree of transparency. We also welcome the periodic wrap-up meetings of the Security Council, as well as the practice by some non-permanent members of providing regular briefings to non-member States on issues of crucial importance.

We commend the prompt and unanimous reaction of the Security Council concerning the events and aftermath of 11 September 2001. Fighting international terrorism must remain at the top of the agenda of the United Nations and especially of the Security Council. In this regard, we have a high appreciation for the activities of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom, and its essential contribution to the follow-up of resolution 1373 (2001).

We wish the Security Council would assume responsibilities and demonstrate leadership in other situations which have been outlined within the report — situations in which the world has been confronted by the nuclear threats of Member States involved in disputes that are apparently of a bilateral or regional character, but have potentially global consequences.

Finding a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is certainly the most painful and sensitive issue for the Security Council, as well as for the United Nations as a whole. Therefore, we believe that the Security Council should remain steadfast in its efforts to implement resolution 1397 (2002), as well as resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), including the peace initiative adopted at the Arab Summit in March 2002.

We fully concur with the assessments contained in the report on the Balkans. Within this context, we would like to stress the considerable contribution of the Security Council and the Secretary-General to making progress in the crisis management of that region. Together with the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations has managed to preserve peace and stability in the region. However, ethnic strife, organized crime and small arms collection remain very important tasks to be dealt with.

In dealing with issues related to peace in the region and the stability of my country, the Republic of Macedonia, the Security Council has acted in a considerate and cooperative manner. In this respect, we would like to mention the adoption of resolution 1371 (2001). This is an excellent example of a quick, measured and effective response of the Security Council to events and developments which were of concern not only to my country, but also to its immediate neighbours and the entire region.

Full engagement of the United Nations in Kosovo is of crucial importance in maintaining peace and stability in South-Eastern Europe. For this reason, acting in full compliance with Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1244 (1999) and 1345 (2001) is necessary. The benchmarks set up by the Special Representative of the General Assembly, implying standards before status, are in full accordance with this.

It is our deep conviction that the Security Council should support the International Criminal Court unconditionally, ensuring that essential principles of international law are not compromised. In that context, we fully support every effort made by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to ensure that all indicted war criminals are brought to justice without further delay.

With regard to conflict prevention and humanitarian issues, the Security Council has managed to make remarkable progress. In adopting its resolution 1366 (2001), on conflict prevention, the Security Council expressed its full commitment to the further implementation, throughout the entire United Nations system, of the recommendations of the Brahimi report (A/55/305) and the Secretary-General's report on conflict prevention (A/55/985). The work carried out by the Security Council and the Secretary-General in developing a policy framework for the protection of civilians in armed conflict deserves our full support. It represents a substantial contribution to the setting up of a coherent approach by the United Nations for the protection of civilian populations during armed conflict.

This discussion of the report of the Security Council also presents an opportunity to reflect on the United Nations as a whole. In making the United Nations a strong multilateral institution in the era of globalization, we must make sure that it enjoys credibility in all parts of the globe. The Security Council has to play a key role in that respect.

The strengthening of the United Nations system is one of the highest-ranking issues on our common agenda. It also implies reform of the Security Council. On the other hand, we must continue to be aware that the Council's decision-making authority is based on its capacity to take prompt and realistically founded decisions and actions. In our opinion, the most recent report of the Security Council contains certain elements which live up to such expectations. Our final goal, however, must still be to make the United Nations a more meaningful, more powerful and more effective Organization. In order to do so, every one of us must be aware that in this situation, no one can afford to behave like an ostrich with its head in the sand.

Mr. Amer (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation welcomes this joint debate in the General Assembly to discuss the report of the Security Council (A/57/2) and the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, since we believe that the two issues are closely linked. The holding of this joint debate is a good start to the rationalization of the work of the General Assembly and will be an encouragement to the Secretary-General, who is endeavouring to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization.

Certain procedures relating to the improvement of the Council's working methods are covered by both issues under discussion today. The Security Council has already begun to implement some of those procedures. In its annual report the Security Council provides evidence that consultations among troop-contributing countries has led to a great improvement in its work. Monthly appraisals of Security Council Presidents and open formal meetings have been very useful. This year's document does not contain the voluminous accounts that were included in the past. Rather, it contains brief accounts that provide adequate information on the deliberations of the Council. We look forward to further improvements in future reports, in accordance with part III of this year's report. The improvements that have been made were based on the serious work undertaken by the Assembly's Open-ended Working Group. We commend the Working Group; it must continue its efforts.

The Council's report refers only briefly to the practice of informal consultations, which have become the real mechanism by which decisions are taken in the Council. We know that such consultations precede the adoption of draft resolutions; the decisions have already been taken by the time the Council holds the public meetings in which the general membership is able to participate. Thus Member States are presented with a fait accompli, as decisions have already been taken in informal consultations.

We would like the Council to further expand its cooperation with the general membership and with regional and subregional organizations, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. We hope that the Council will conduct a general review of its procedures. Improvements must be mandatory if they are to have a real impact on working methods.

Enhancing the relationship between the Security Council and the other principal organs of the United Nations is essential. It is unacceptable that the Council's relationship with the General Assembly should be confined to the issuance of an annual report. Cooperation between the Council and the General Assembly should be further expanded in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter. We also believe that the relations between the Council and the Economic and Social Council and the International Court of Justice should be further expanded.

The Security Council should be impartial and objective and avoid selectivity and double standards when dealing with the various issues on its agenda. If transparency and democracy are the true foundations on which the legitimacy of national Governments rests, they should also apply to the United Nations, particularly the Security Council.

The practice of holding consultations behind closed doors among a very limited number of Council members should stop immediately. Failing to take action in this respect will result in one single country — or a very few countries — becoming the decision makers in the Council. This would cast doubt on the legitimacy of the Council's resolutions, which are adopted on behalf of the international community.

The Security Council will also perform its duties better when its composition reflects a more equitable geographic distribution. The Non-Aligned Movement has always stood firm on this issue, as we believe that expansion of the membership of the Council should be based on the principle of the sovereign equality of States. We believe that the non-permanent category of membership should be expanded. There should be no increase in the number of permanent members, as we do not want more members with special privileges.

We believe that expansion should be carried out in a non-selective manner and should take account of the limits imposed by the Organization's budget. We should also focus on increasing the resources of peacekeeping operations so as to weaken the power wielded by the strong over the weak. The general membership should be represented in an equitable and fair manner. Africa does not have an adequate number of seats in the Council much less a permanent seat, although the African Group has more members than any other regional group in the Organization. This is contrary to the proposal made at the Harare summit that Africa be granted two permanent seats in the Council in a manner commensurate with the size of its membership.

The question of the veto is one of the most controversial issues with respect to the reform of the Council. It is no exaggeration to say that it has further complicated the work of the Council since the establishment of the Organization. Since the first instance of its use, it has become clear that it runs counter to the principle of equal sovereignty among States and to other principles contained in the Charter. It does not promote democracy but undermines it. It accords a privilege to some, who then use it in the service of their own interests and against the national and international interests of others.

This poses a challenge to the authority of the majority of the Council. We believe that the use of the veto should be subject to approval by a two-thirds majority of the membership of the General Assembly. We believe also that Council reform will not be complete as long as the veto right is not eliminated. Only a few Members of the United Nations will have that right and will use it to impose their will on the rest of the world.

A few days ago, the Secretary-General stated that no reform of the United Nations would be complete without the reform of the Security Council. Two years ago, the Millennium Declaration called for the intensification of efforts to comprehensively reform the Security Council in all its aspects. This call should be translated into concrete action. It can become reality only through the cooperation of all.

We hope that the upcoming meetings of the Working Group on Council reform will give priority to the key objectives of the Charter of the United Nations in order further to democratize the Council and its work.

Mr. Atta (Egypt) *(spoke in Arabic)*: I should like at the outset to extend my heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia in the wake of the tragic events that took place late last week.

We would all agree that the Security Council has devoted most of its meetings and consultations to Africa and its various political issues. We would also agree that the Council has amply demonstrated that it is capable of bearing the heavy responsibility entrusted to it by the Member States for the maintenance of peace and security in the African continent. This has been made clear in the efforts it has deployed in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, in Ethiopia and Eritrea and in other hotbeds of tension in the continent.

This gives us grounds for optimism and hope as to the Council's determination to fulfil the tremendous responsibility entrusted to it of settling armed conflicts in Africa and to use its political weight to support efforts for peace in Africa.

At the same time, proceeding from our collective will to enhance the role of the Council in Africa and to promote a partnership between the Council, the continent and its regional and subregional organizations, we would like to stress three basic pillars that should underline the Council's approach to African issues.

First, an effort should be made to establish an institutionalized and regulated relationship between the Security Council and African organizations in the field of conflict settlement and the maintenance of peace and security in the continent. This relationship would keep the Council abreast of the positions taken by the African continent and take account of the limited military, logistical and financial resources of the continent.

Secondly, the Security Council's responsibilities should be extended to the other armed conflicts that are tearing the African continent asunder, not only those that are of special interest to its influential members. It should deal with all conflicts in the continent in an equitable manner that does not discriminate between the various issues. That could be done by devoting increased attention to the issues of Somalia, the Central African Republic, Burundi, Liberia and others that have not been given the same attention by the Council or the international community.

Thirdly, the Security Council's response to conflicts in Africa should be commensurate with the dimension and complexity of those conflicts. That will require political will on the part of the Council that is equal to that shown in the case of Timor-Leste, Kosovo and other areas — areas that are not in Africa. Peacekeeping missions in the continent could also be given further attention and resources.

For more than a decade now, the General Assembly's Working Group on reform and expansion of the membership of the Council has been doing very important work. We are committed to the position of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the African Union, and we have actively participated in both their working groups on this issue. We would like in this regard to stress the elements included in the statement made by the representative of Ethiopia with respect to the African position on the expansion of the membership of the Council.

All of these working groups have deployed tireless efforts to reform the Council in the area of the permanent and non-permanent categories and with regard to the veto right and other working methods of the Council. However, any delay in the consideration of these issues should not be interpreted as acceptance by the General Assembly of the present form or working methods of the Council. We believe, therefore, that a number of steps should be taken in order to give the expansion of the Council the high priority it deserves.

Closed meetings of the Council have become the rule, though they were intended to be the exception. That affects the openness of the Council, since decisions are taken during the closed consultations, while open meetings are held to enable the general membership — whose influence on decision-making is not clear — to express their views. Therefore, we request greater transparency in the methods of work of the Council in its private meetings and in its closed consultations.

Secondly, the Security Council must take into account the views of non-member States of the Council that have a direct or indirect connection to a given issue, in particular when it comes to the imposition of measures against another State, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter. That Article has been ignored for too long. It is applicable and should be resorted to, and we believe that the time has come to do so.

Thirdly, the Security Council should further seek out the specific opinions of the general membership when discussing any important issue. That would add to the practicality, credibility and applicability of any decision taken by the Council.

Fourthly, the Council should address all threats to international peace and security on an equal footing. Certain international issues should enjoy greater attention from the Council, which we have seen hasten to deal with one particular question while ignoring others that may pose a greater threat to international peace and security.

Fifthly, all Security Council resolutions should be implemented with equal rigour. Some are implemented immediately and to the letter, while others seem to be ignored by the Council or by any State that may be involved in their implementation. We in the Middle East have many examples to invoke in this regard.

Sixthly, with respect to the Council's working methods and the follow-up to its recommendations, the Council took a commendable step in establishing a Panel of Experts last July to submit an independent report on the violations of the arms embargo against Somalia. A similar step should be taken with regard to the grave violations of international humanitarian law committed in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The Open-ended Working Group has held only six meetings over the course of the entire year. This, we believe, will not lead to the further progress that we all expect on the Council.

Mr. Yuchengco (Philippines): Through you, Sir, allow me to thank the Permanent Representative of Cameroon and President of the Security Council for this month, Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou, for introducing this year's report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

The Philippines also wishes to extend its deepest condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia over the despicable terrorist attack this past weekend, which took the lives of so many. Our condolences go, too, to the other Governments and families that also lost loved ones in the attack.

The General Assembly, which is the only United Nations organ that receives reports from the other principal organs, including that of the Security Council, must effectively seize this opportunity each session to comment on and assess the Security Council's work and decisions during the period covered by its annual report.

As a whole, we find the present annual report more concise and more organized than previous ones. We congratulate the Council on the changes made to the report's format and we welcome the new format, which provides more substantive details and information. We further welcome the inclusion of an analytical portion on the activities of the Council in the introduction segment of the report. Perhaps that section could be expanded in future reports.

We also note the deletion of the descriptive list of all decisions, resolutions and presidential statements for the one-year period preceding the period covered by the current report, and we are pleased that the report no longer includes the verbatim account of the discussions on each subject dealt with by the Council during the period under consideration.

These changes, at the very least, make it easier for the general membership to gain a clearer appreciation of the activities and decisions of the Council. Nevertheless, it might also be useful for the Council to consider submitting, from time to time each year, special reports, as referred to in Article 15 of the Charter, so as to keep the General Assembly abreast of the Council's work. For example, the period of the present report goes up to 31 July 2002. A supplemental special report covering the period from, say, 1 August to 1 October would also have been useful.

Regarding the observation of delegations in previous debates on this item that the Council's report is not analytical, but a mere compendium of documents and activities undertaken by the Council, my delegation shares the view that an analytical report would be virtually impossible, given the highly politicized and controversial nature of many issues considered by the Security Council. As my delegation has stated before, we believe that the analysis and assessment of the issues in the report are the responsibility of the States members of the General Assembly. It is up to us to assess what is contained in the report.

We are pleased to note from the report that the year under review was marked by significant events, highlighted by, among other things, the Council's action on terrorism, the successful completion of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), the launching of the Bonn process and its on-track implementation in Afghanistan, and the peace process and successful elections in Sierra Leone. While there are an abundant number of issues covered by the report, in view of the limited time, allow me to comment on just some.

We commend the efforts of the Council in fighting terrorism. In particular, we support the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which we note has made considerable progress over the past year. The Philippines is committed to supporting the work of the Committee, particularly its programme on technical assistance. We also believe that to enhance more effective implementation by States of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), the provision of technical assistance would be more than helpful.

We recognize the significant role of the Council in the establishment of UNMISET, which led to the full independence of East Timor. As we celebrate the birth of that new nation, we join other nations in welcoming Timor-Leste as the newest Member of the United Nations.

The Security Council has a crucial role to play in finding an effective solution to the Middle East conflict, and we believe it must continue to do so. My delegation views the recently adopted declaration of the Quartet, specifying its three-phase solution to realize the vision of two States living side by side in secure borders, as a positive development. We would, however, emphasize that the international community cannot impose peace. The success of the Quartet formula rests on the parties concerned. We reiterate that there is no military solution to the Middle East conflict. The way forward is through political negotiations.

The Security Council's consideration of the issue of small arms is important and should complement the efforts of the General Assembly, as well as national and regional activities.

On the working methods of the Council, we believe that a number of improvements have been made over the past few years in order to increase transparency and greater participation by non-members. Nevertheless, the Council's procedures and the recent positive innovations in its working methods remain provisional and ad hoc in nature. The Council might wish to heed the Secretary-General's suggestion in his agenda for further change (A/57/387) that the Council consider codifying its recent changes. One way to do that would be to adopt definitively its provisional rules of procedures and annex its recent innovations to the rules. We also support more dialogue between the representatives of the Council and the General Assembly's Open-ended Working Group on the Council's working methods and related issues. Such meetings have proven to be useful and a good way for the Council and General Assembly to have an interactive exchange on a broad range of issues.

We find the Council's thematic debates very useful, and they should be continued. Nevertheless, we believe they should also aim at some action-oriented objective over a medium-term period. The Council's thematic debates should also be synchronized with debates on the same issues in the General Assembly, in order to link the decisions and appropriate policy actions taken by the Council and the Assembly on these issues. One such issue that comes to mind is the prevention of armed conflict. Linking outcomes would also be a step towards more interaction between the Council and the Assembly.

In the coming years, my delegation looks forward to a more substantive consideration by the Assembly of the report of the Council, not necessarily of the whole report but at least of certain issues addressed in it. In that regard, it is suggested that the President identify specific issues for more intensive discussion. That should be done while taking into account Article 12 and in a more informal format, such as informal consultations or round tables. The discussions should aim at reaching a specific outcome such as a decision, a chairman's summary or simply an aide-memoire of the discussion. This approach would, in our view, be in line with the intent of earlier resolutions on the revitalization of the General Assembly. The issues selected could be country-specific or could be among the thematic matters considered by the Council.

Regarding the agenda item on the reform of the Security Council, the Philippines is committed to promoting agreement on measures aimed at achieving a more open and transparent decision-making process in the Security Council, as well as on finding an acceptable compromise on the expansion in the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the Council.

As we enter the tenth year of our exercise on the reform of the Security Council, we remain deadlocked on the issue of new permanent members. The Open-ended Working Group has had some influence in initiating positive reforms in the working methods of the Council, including more open meetings, regular briefings and improved arrangements for consultations with troop-contributing countries. We therefore believe

that this session of the work of the Group should focus on the main outstanding issues of expansion, while preserving the tentative agreements reached on cluster II issues relating to the Council's working methods.

Finally, we are prepared to support all efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive package agreement consisting of measures relating to the expansion of the Council's membership and to enhancing the transparency of the Council's working methods.

Mr. Sun (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to convey my delegation's deep condolences to the bereaved families of those killed in the bomb attack in Indonesia last weekend. We also wish a speedy recovery to those injured as a result of that attack. We condemn acts of terrorism targeting innocent civilians and reaffirm our commitment to join the rest of international community in fighting such terrorist acts.

As we have noted, this year's report of the Security Council (A/57/2) contains many improvements over previous reports. It is more cost-effective thanks to the reduction in the size of the report. With the introduction of an analytical overview, it also gives a clearer picture of the Council's work. Such progress in the format of the report is a welcome response to long-standing requests from the wider membership of the United Nations. We believe that these efforts on the part of the Security Council to make its report a more in-depth account of its work should be continued and further strengthened.

Let me now briefly review the Council's work over the past year. The period under consideration, from June 2001 to July 2002, was indeed a unique and busy time. Among other things, the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, for whose gravity no precedent exists, changed our perception of the world. As the international community swiftly realized the imperative need to stand together in the face of such global threats, the Security Council rose to the occasion by reinforcing the resolve of the international community and by enhancing its readiness to take united action. The adoption of resolution 1373 (2001) and the subsequent establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee clearly demonstrated how the international community, under the guidance of the Security Council, can act in partnership and solidarity in the fight against a common security threat.

With regard to regional matters, the cases of Afghanistan and East Timor stand out as successful missions. With well-planned engagement and assistance, as set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions, both countries have made remarkable progress towards stability and democracy. The Republic of Korea has been actively engaged in the efforts of the international community in this regard, including by providing humanitarian assistance and logistical and other support.

Mr. Santa Clara Gomes (Portugal), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In the Middle East, there seems to be no respite in violence and strife. The loss of civilian lives and the deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the region are of profound concern. There have been both achievements and setbacks in the Council's work to address these challenges. However, what is important is that the Security Council has laid down crucial groundwork for peace in the Middle East by setting out in its resolution 1397 (2001) a vision of two States living side by side within secure and recognized borders. We truly hope that the efforts of the international community, particularly those of the "Quartet", to bring lasting peace to the region will succeed in achieving a positive outcome within the framework of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

With regard to Africa, it has been encouraging to note the cessation of some civil and inter-State conflicts. Though peace in many parts of the continent still remains fragile, such developments as the holding of elections in Sierra Leone and peace agreements relating to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola certainly give us cause for optimism and hope. The role of the Security Council, including its mandate of peacekeeping and peace-building missions, is indispensable to these endeavours. Noteworthy, too, is the Council's renewed attention to the region with the establishment of the Ad hoc Working Group on Africa during the year.

My delegation also values the work of the Security Council in Europe and other parts of the world, as well as its continued engagement with the issues of protecting civilians, especially women and children in armed conflicts.

Let me now turn to the working methods of the Security Council. My delegation's basic approach to this matter, perhaps shared by many other delegations,

is that the views and observations of the wider membership of the United Nations should be duly reflected in the work of the Security Council. In this ever-globalizing world, few international issues of peace and security remain isolated in scope and seriousness. As the issue of counter-terrorism most compellingly shows, the matters before the Council have far-reaching implications and consequences for nearly all corners of the world. Transparency in the work of the Council and the substantial contributions by its non-members are two sides of the same coin, since, without comprehensive knowledge of the Council's work, the non-member States can hardly make meaningful contributions. Stronger and wider participation by non-members in the Council discussions would also further enhance the authority of the Council in implementing its resolutions.

In this regard, the increasing frequency of public meetings and briefings in the Security Council is a welcome development. The way that the Counter-Terrorism Committee has worked, offering regular briefings by its chairman, is an example to be emulated. However, the challenge ahead lies in the fact that confidentiality still serves as the norm rather than the exception in the work of the Council and that there exists great inconsistency in the openness and transparency, from month to month and from committee to committee.

My delegation believes that further efforts should be made to find ways and means to enhance openness, transparency and efficiency in the working methods of the Security Council. We would like to suggest that the public meetings of the Council, particularly those on thematic issues, be conducted in a more focused manner, by narrowing the scope of subject under discussion, thereby enabling the Council's discussions to be more action-oriented.

Other measures might include the institutionalization of post-meeting briefings and timely dissemination of the results of meetings, including those of the sanctions committees. With regard to post-meeting briefings, we believe that the option of appointing a spokesperson, whose major role would be to provide up-to-date briefings to non-members on the results of each meeting, merits serious consideration.

Let me now turn to the question of the reform of the Security Council. First of all, while the slow pace of discussions and lack of tangible progress can be frustrating, we should not attribute this stalemate to ineffectiveness on the part of the Working Group; rather, it is a reflection of the tremendous significance and politically sensitive nature of this issue. My delegation believes that the Working Group, the sole body mandated by the General Assembly to discuss Security Council reforms, still remains the best forum for addressing the issue.

Secondly, the reform of the Security Council, both in its shape and in its decision-making process, should be guided by democratic principles and should reflect our current reality. The two major questions — the enlargement of the Council and the decision-making procedures — are inextricably linked and are therefore best considered in a single context.

Thirdly, as we have witnessed, a growing number of States have been playing an increasingly active role in the work of the United Nations and have become indispensable to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. In spite of these developments, only a handful of Member States are given the opportunity to fully participate in the work of the Security Council. This discrepancy lies at the heart of our efforts to reform the Security Council. In light of this situation, a greater effort must be made to find ways to provide as many countries as possible with the opportunity to serve on the Council on a more frequent basis.

I would like to reiterate my Government's view that an increase in the number of non-permanent seats alone is a viable option under the circumstances. This would allow more members to be elected for regular terms, thereby making the Council more representative and accountable.

Finally, cooperation among the whole of the United Nations membership will be needed to surmount the daunting challenges ahead of us. In this context, it is critical that the reform of the Security Council be carried out in a way that unites Member States.

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to remind Members that the General Committee will meet tomorrow morning, Tuesday, 15 October, at 9.30 in Conference Room 4. The agenda for the meeting can be found in today's Journal.

I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to express my condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia and to the family members of all the victims of the terrible terrorist attack, a scourge of the twenty-first century.

Secondly, I would like to thank all the Members of the United Nations for supporting Spain's candidacy to one of the non-permanent member seats of the Security Council for the coming biennium. I also want to thank the representative of Cameroon, the current President of the Security Council, for presenting this report.

The Foreign Minister of Spain, in her speech in the General Assembly in September, said that our country would, during its tenure, work in favour of transparency and greater openness of the Council. It is undeniable that progress has been made in improving the working methods of the Council in recent times; for example, the increase in the number of public meetings, which are open to participation to all non-members who wish to attend, and the innovative practice introduced by some members of the Council to hold the so-called wrap-up meetings at the end of their presidency. Another interesting example is that of the meetings in the last two years of the Working Group on Security Council Reform with representatives of the Council members in order to discuss aspects of working methods.

Also with respect to achievements, we should underline the excellent reform to the format and content of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, now under consideration. Numerous delegations, including mine, have spoken in favour of a less voluminous report that is easier for the user, more analytical and more transparent. The report — we are delighted to say — has improved considerably and better corresponds to the wishes expressed by many Member States. We wish to thank the members of the Council for the work carried out, with a special mention for Ambassador Mahbubani.

Despite the achievements, the reality is that the Council continues to favour closed meetings — the consultations — and the semi-closed meetings, the so-called private meetings. My delegation has traditionally argued that the consultations should be reduced to the minimum number necessary and that an effort should be made to clarify the modalities and criteria for the participation of non-member States in the private meetings.

The question of working methods is not a futile discussion. We are convinced that one of the ways to make the Security Council more effective lies in carrying improvements in this area further.

As has been noted on various occasions, including at the Millennium Summit, the great majority of Members of the Organization desire a reform of the Security Council that will make it a more efficient and more participative organ. A reform of that kind can be carried out only if there is consensus on the elements such a reform consists of. The Millennium Declaration echoes this need when it calls on all to carry out a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. The clarity of the Declaration is obvious and completely excludes any partial focus. Unfortunately, we are still far from reaching consensus on the various aspects of reform, and, therefore, discussions in the Working Group of the General Assembly should continue.

One of the key aspects of reform is the decision-making process in the Council, including the veto. The question of the veto is an essential aspect of Council reform. It is of prime importance. The great majority of States unhesitatingly wish that this unparalleled instrument of power be eliminated or — if nothing else — reduced in scope.

However, we know that our ambition is somewhat illusory. Those possessing the veto power are unlikely to surrender it, even partially. We also know that the status of permanent member is inexorably linked to the veto power. Bearing that in mind, an obvious question must once more be asked: do we realize — in 2002, 57 years after the last war — what it would mean to increase the number of permanent members, based on more than debatable criteria, in addition to granting them the all-powerful prerogative of being able to veto any resolution of the Council? Can we, today, collectively and bitterly lament that the United Nations has been prevented from acting because the vote of a single member has paralyzed it, and then tomorrow grant that same paralyzing power to another handful of chosen States?

The veto is a crucial element of reform, in particular as it relates to an increase in the membership. When, in the twenty-first century, there is

a demand among Members to abolish an existing power, it is, to say the least, strange that we should grant that power to yet another group of countries. Aside from acting paradoxically, we would be creating a new class of privileged States, poorly serving the United Nations.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): I cannot begin today without expressing to the Indonesian authorities our profound shock and grief at what happened in Bali. We condemn the bombing in the strongest terms. Our thoughts and prayers are with those families who have lost their loved ones.

We owe sincere thanks to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou for his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council (A/57/2).

This year's report, as has been stated, marks a notable improvement in trying to be more than just a reference document. We view the editorial changes favourably. We would suggest further rationalization of the contents through the elimination of all sections containing records of meetings and catalogues of documents. If deemed necessary, a separate volume, which would not duplicate the repertoire, could be considered.

The objective of this debate is to exchange information, to share views and to deliberate on policy orientation on international peace and security. In that context, we find the introduction to the report of particular interest. It is a laudable initiative. Nevertheless, it falls short of what the general membership has long been asking for. The introduction does not go beyond what we read in individual presidential assessment reports.

While on the Council, Bangladesh had wished for a report that would serve the purpose of a dialogue between the Council and the Assembly. The idea we pursued was to have a substantive report that would present an analysis of issues before the Council, the difficulties confronted in resolving ongoing conflicts, the challenges of prevention and the tasks of peace-building.

To that end, we suggested that the report include, apart from information and analysis, specific recommendations on the implementation of its resolutions and decisions. The Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It cannot discharge that responsibility alone. Given the complexity of today's conflicts and other threats to international peace and security, the Council's efforts require the support of the Assembly and other organs, funds, programmes and agencies. The Bretton Woods institutions, regional and subregional organizations, the non-governmental organizations and the private sector are also important players and stakeholders. There is need, and certainly the scope, to further strengthen cooperation and coordination with those stakeholders.

The decisions of the Security Council affect Member States. We would have liked the Council to tell us, for instance, about non-compliance with its resolutions, the violation of sanctions and the impact of sanctions on third countries.

For the next session, we would expect the President of the Security Council to present a substantive report — just like the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization — highlighting the issues the Council addressed over the reporting year, presenting the challenges ahead and calling for the specific support required for implementation of its resolutions and decisions. The report should cover the period from October to September, given that the Security Council report is considered in mid-October.

Let me share some of our specific ideas and concerns with regard to the Council's functioning. First, with respect to the Council's relationship with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council: as we have suggested on other occasions, the General Assembly and the Security Council could hold quarterly meetings for review of the implementation of Council decisions. The areas of cooperation and coordination might be identified and worked out by their respective offices in coordination with the Secretariat. The General Assembly President might have with him five members of his Bureau representing the five electoral groups. The Security Council President likewise might have five members representing five electoral groups. A similar institutional arrangement might be envisaged for coordination with the Economic and Social Council.

Secondly, as regards openness and participation, Council meetings should be held in public or private formats, depending on the need for confidentiality. The use of informal consultations should be restricted to exceptionally sensitive cases. When the agenda item so

requires, the Council should meet with the active participation of non-members and other stakeholders, the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, in their deliberations. Further ways and means should be explored to involve non-governmental organizations in the Council's work. We have supported increased recourse to orientation debates for the purpose. The Council might hold more Arria-formula meetings to exchange views with civil society organizations, including non-governmental organizations and think tanks.

Thirdly, on the Council's relationship with troop-contributing countries, we note with regret the continuation of the practice of pro forma meetings. Bangladesh proposed the holding of periodic meetings between the Council and the troop-contributing countries, instead of the last-minute pro forma meetings called generally prior to renewal of peacekeeping mandates. Such meetings convened under the terms of Council resolutions 1327 (2000) and 1353 (2001) would be important for sustained exchange, review of implementation of the mandate of missions and discussion of any difficulties faced by the missions. These periodic meetings would allow for better reflection of the concerns and positions of troop-contributing countries in Council decisions.

Fourthly, we recognize the extremely valuable contribution made by groups of friends in drafting Council resolutions. In the current practice, Council members not represented on any of these groups are virtually excluded from the decision-making process. There should be an official list, with the composition of the various groups of friends, however informal they may be. The list of the groups of friends should be posted on the United Nations web site.

Fifthly, on relating procedural improvements to substantive action, besides the specific suggestions, we have stressed the need to relate procedural reforms to those of substance. First, the Council should function in such a way as not to invite the criticism of "doing too little, too late" as has, at times, been the case. The Council should be proactive rather then reactive, as has sadly been the case in recent times. The Council should address issues more on the basis of developments rather than as calendar events determined by the submission of reports or expiry of mandates.

We note with satisfaction a positive evolution in the Council's perception of peace and security. The challenge of maintaining international peace and security is increasingly recognized as a continuing process requiring a comprehensive approach and involving all stakeholders.

Finally, on the issue of expansion, Bangladesh shares the position taken by the Non-Aligned Movement. We hold the view that both reform and expansion of the Security Council should be considered as integral parts of a common package. We support an increase in the membership of the Security Council by not less than 11, based on the principles of equitable geographical distribution and sovereign equality of States.

The objective of reform remains to enhance transparency, accountability and democratization in the decision-making process of the Security Council. We are not in favour of any partial or selective expansion or enlargement of the membership to the detriment of developing countries.

We also believe that the Council should function more as a rule-based organ in accordance with Charter provisions. The principle and the objective of collective security should be upheld in its action in every case.

All these principles have been stated time and again. But the process remains stalled in the Working Group. The United Nations has accomplished significant reforms in past years. After his track 1 and track 2 reforms, the Secretary-General has launched a further programme of revitalization and rationalization of the Organization. The process will remain incomplete without reform of the Security Council. It is time we thought of ways and means to engage in serious negotiations on core issues and lead the reform process to a conclusion.

Bangladesh attaches the greatest importance to the peace and security mission of the Organization and the role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. We have made every effort to contribute to that mission. We have demonstrated our commitment by extending the fullest cooperation to the Council, by contributing to positive, proactive and constructive decision-making directly as a member in 2000 and 2001, and by contributing troops and other personnel to United Nations peace operations, irrespective of risks and uncertainties.

The overarching goal of reform and expansion of the Security Council for us is to make the Council more balanced, representative and effective. There have been major breaches of the peace across the world in the past two decades. The Security Council has not always been effective. It has remained stymied. It has been accused of employing double standards. There have been wars between, but mostly within, States. The humanitarian consequences in each case, though differing in extent and magnitude, have been appalling. The impact on the economies of the affected countries, almost all of them developing nations, has been disastrous. The cost of these wars for third countries and, in general, for the international community has also been enormous.

All these conflicts have been senseless. All these expenditures could, and should, have been avoided. It should be our common endeavour to pursue the Charter's objective of employing "international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples".

But when a sizeable portion of global resources is spent on armed conflicts, this aim remains seriously jeopardized. If the Security Council fails to address this phenomenon, the vision of the founding fathers of this Organization will remain unrealized.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Firstly, I wish to express condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia for the savage terrorist attack that took place in Bali on 2 October, which we condemn most vigorously.

This year we have decided to have a joint debate of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly and the question of reform of the Security Council. It is the right thing to do, because both subjects have a common denominator that, I think, is an objective all of us here share — namely, to have a more transparent Security Council in its working methods, more representative in its composition, more democratic in its decision-making process and more accountable to the rest of the United Nations membership for its actions.

Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon, in his capacity as President of the Security Council, introduced the Council's report, contained in document A/57/2. Here we want to emphasize an important positive point — last year's debate was not in vain; the Council adopted a receptive and positive attitude. It took into account the Assembly's criticism concerning the format and substance of the report and produced a shorter and more useful one. In this respect, we want to praise the role played by the non-permanent members, and in particular, Singapore and its Permanent Representative, my friend, the indefatigable and intelligent Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani. It is also worth noting that, for the first time, the report contains an introduction with an analytical summary. In this respect, we appreciate the contribution made by the United Kingdom.

There is no doubt that the report can and should be improved. For the most part, it continues to be a formal description of events that does little justice to the substantive work carried out by the Council. Nevertheless, we believe that a first step has been taken in the right direction. That step should be encouraged.

With regard to transparency, we are grateful to the Secretariat for the preparation of document S/2002/603, which illustrates the positive development in the working methods of the Council during the past few years. In this connection, we support the suggestion made by the Secretary-General in his report on the strengthening of the United Nations (A/57/387) concerning codification of those practices. Contrary to the views expressed by some permanent members during the public meeting of 26 September, we do not believe that such codification would work against pragmatism and dynamism in the Council's work. On the contrary, it would improve the legal soundness of procedures and contribute to diminishing the margin for discretion, especially that of the permanent members. Those members constitute the sole repository of the Council's institutional memory and, on more than one occasion, have invoked precedents that the non-permanent members are at a loss to recall. We believe that, after 57 years, it is time for the Council's rules of procedure to cease being provisional.

There is no doubt that there has been progress. Today we have a Council that is a little more transparent than it was 10 years ago. Nevertheless, there is still a long way to go. As the report itself points out, most of the Council's substantive work takes place in informal consultations. Public meetings therefore serve as a rubber stamp for what is negotiated and agreed upon behind closed doors. Having said that, we are aware of the fact that informal consultations are a reality in the work of the Council. Faced with that reality, we must act, first to reduce the number of

informal consultations and, secondly, to allow access to consultations, under specific circumstances, to a State party to a conflict that is not a member of the Council. We believe that Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter provide an adequate legal basis for doing so. The participation of interested States should not hinder the Council's decision-making process. On the contrary, it would increase the transparency and political legitimacy of the decisions adopted by the Council.

Also with regard to the issue of informal consultations, we would like to recall the Argentine proposal put forth in the note by the President of the Council (S/2000/155), which was issued on 28 February 2000. That proposal would invite newly elected members to participate in the Council's informal consultations during the month immediately preceding their term of membership. That proposal would guarantee greater transparency and make it possible for new members to acquaint themselves with the Council's practices in informal consultations.

The last few weeks have done little to contribute to transparency in the Council. We have all witnessed how discussions about issues crucial to international peace and security that affect basic principles of international law, and that may seriously affect the very existence of the United Nations, take place exclusively among the permanent members of the Council. It seems that the elected members of the Council and the rest of us only have the right to be informed through the newspapers. We have recently read that proposals have been made to include in the text of a resolution an unacceptable and discriminatory distinction between the powers of permanent and elected members, something that runs counter to the letter and the spirit of the Charter.

We would not like to conclude this part of our statement on the working methods of the Council on a negative note. We would therefore like to point to two positive developments. First, we are pleased with the follow-up received by the initiative launched by the delegations of Argentina and New Zealand in 1994 to institutionalize the meetings with the troop-contributing countries. Resolution 1353 (2001) has paved the way for a more substantive dialogue.

In the context of the Council's work in the fight against terrorism, we would like to highlight the transparency and efficiency of the work done by Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee established by resolution 1373 (2001), and by Ambassador Valdivieso of Colombia in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee established by resolution 1267 (1999).

After nine years of deliberations, we have still not achieved the progress desired with regard to the veto and to increasing the membership of the Council. Like the overwhelming majority of Member States, Argentina is opposed to the veto. The veto is an institution that runs contrary to the principle of sovereign equality among States. We are nevertheless realistic enough to know that the elimination of the veto will not be accepted in the medium term. That is why we propose a functional and reasonable limitation of the veto that includes restricting its use to situations under Chapter VII of the Charter. In our opinion, such limitations should be established through amendments to the Charter. A political commitment would not provide sufficient legal guarantees. Even a unilateral legal declaration to restrict the use of the veto would fail to prevail over the provisions of Article 103 of the Charter.

We have said on numerous occasions that the reform of the Security Council is a "package deal". We therefore cannot artificially separate proposals by, for example, putting off the issue of the veto and discussing only the matter of expansion, under the pretext that the veto has not been used much since the end of the cold war and that it does not represent a reform priority at the moment. Our recent experience in the Council does not support that conclusion. On the contrary, it shows that the veto or the threat of veto is a relevant political tool. That is the reason for the reluctance to change on the part of permanent members. There is no doubt that issues of expansion and of the power of the veto are closely linked, given that it is clear that it is not possible to take a decision on the enlargement of a body of such political importance as the Council without a previous agreement on the decision-making process of that body. That is why the real reason for the delay in the reform of the Council is clear: it lies within an obstructionist minority that opposes any limitation of the veto, and not in the vast majority of States that want a more democratic and representative Council.

We believe that we should not perpetuate the inequalities of the past by establishing new permanent seats following the model of 1945, namely, members that are not accountable to the rest of the membership

and that enjoy the privilege of the veto. Doing so would further augment existing inequalities. It would also be tantamount to ignoring the march of history and would imperil the right of every Member State to elect and be elected to participate in the system of collective security. Quite frankly, in nine years of discussion we have not heard any proposals to increase the number of permanent members that have not contradicted the democratic principles espoused by their sponsors in their own legal systems.

I would like to repeat once again that Argentina only supports increasing the number of non-permanent members. We believe such members should be elected in accordance with the criteria set out in Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Charter, namely, on the basis of their contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and the principle of equitable geographic distribution. We believe that those criteria continue to be in effect. Finally, we also think that it is up to regional groups to decide the allocation of the new non-permanent seats created as a consequence of the reform of the Council.

I would not want to end my statement without conveying our congratulations to the newly elected members of the Council: Angola, Chile, Germany, Spain and Pakistan.

Mr. McIvor (New Zealand): May I add my delegation's condolences to the families of the victims of last weekend's appalling terrorist attacks in Bali, which has left many killed and many more injured. This a very tragic reminder of the global nature of the terrorist threat and the need equally of global responses, something indeed that has been on the forefront of the Security Council's action in the past year.

We welcome the decision to combine the debate on the annual report of the Security Council with that on issues relating to its membership and working methods. We hope that this will mean a more efficient use of this Assembly's time. More important, we see this as a logical combination, since the two items are inextricably linked. In my delegation's view the performance and credibility of the Council depend much on how it is constituted and how it conducts its business. Consideration of the report should play a key role in our collective efforts to enhance the Council's transparency and effectiveness and hold it accountable.

My delegation joins others in welcoming the efforts that have been made this year to produce a more concise, analytical and user-friendly annual report of the Security Council. In this the Council has begun to respond to calls made over the last few years for improvements in this report. We have been seeking a report that is substantive rather than formal, analytic rather than descriptive. In this regard, the commentary provided in the eight-page introduction to this year's annual report represents a move in the right direction.

It has been a remarkable year for the Council, including the response to terrorist attacks of September last year, the substantially increased attention to the Middle East, and the Council's key role in international action on Afghanistan. The report's introduction conveys a sense of the Council's response to new and continuing challenges. We look forward to next year's report building on this by providing a fuller analysis of how the Council has dealt with issues coming before it — what worked well, what didn't work so well, and why. The report is the Council's opportunity to address its universal constituency on vital issues of international peace and security.

On transparency and working methods, we welcome the President's note of May 2002 on procedural developments. Indeed we would have thought that the President's note contains information and comment that could usefully be incorporated in the annual report itself — the current section on these issues in the introduction is very brief. We fully support the suggestion that recent improvements in working methods might be codified in some way.

In the past year there have been encouraging developments to further enhance Member State consultation with the Council, including a useful joint meeting of the Open-ended Working Group and the Council to discuss workings methods. There have been more open-ended meetings and wrap-up sessions. Presidency web sites have been very helpful, particularly when kept up to date. The Singapore presidency in particular worked hard at improving transparency and the effectiveness of non-member participation.

The consultation process between the Council and troop-contributing countries is settling in well. Again we appreciate the Council's responsiveness to concerns expressed last year on this issue, including by my delegation. We welcome the arrangements for

consultation between the Council's Working Group on Peacekeeping and Troop-Contributing Countries, set out in the Council's President's note of 14 January. This provides an additional mechanism to that contained in Council resolution 1353 (2001). We found the joint meeting with East Timor troop-contributing countries helpful, though we would have welcomed more interaction with Council members attending the session.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, opportunities for consultation between members and non-members remain predominantly formal, involving set pieces with limited interaction. At times it is entirely appropriate that Member States set out national positions during these sessions. However, on other occasions the discussions could be more free-flowing. We accept that the onus to improve the quality of these debates rests with non-members as well as members. We also recognize that the Council's time is limited and that it is faced with a growing number of increasingly complex issues. Selective use of additional committees or working groups might help in this regard and at the same time encourage greater interaction between members and interested non-members. We wonder also whether the physical layout and grandeur of the Council Chamber might not also inhibit more useful interaction.

Transparency counts most when it relates to matters of substance. Many important issues continue to take place behind close doors. Smaller missions in particular have difficulty keeping in touch with key developments when this involves deploying limited resources outside the Council Chamber. There is only so much coffee one can drink in a day. In this regard, advance notice of the timing of briefings is helpful.

The essential dilemma remains. When non-members are not permitted to attend Council meetings, their ability to make a contribution to its deliberations depends on having some knowledge of those discussions — and then the opportunity to make an input before the Council comes to a decision. In this regard we welcome the readiness of some non-permanent members to seek our views on regional issues coming before the Council.

We recognize that on occasion draft texts need to be considered behind closed doors in the interest of achieving consensus. But we need to remind ourselves that transparency and participation are the keys to credibility and effectiveness. The rules of procedure say that the Council shall meet in public unless it decides otherwise; public discussion should be the rule and not the exception. In 2001, there were 183 informal consultations compared with 159 public meetings. With respect to private meetings, they can be a useful tool for the involvement of non-Council members, but we need clear and uniform rules for participation.

Finally, there is little more that can be said about recent further attempts to achieve a more representative Council. During the course of the year the Working Group was unable to make any progress on the matter. This comes at a time when the Security Council has been wrestling with issues that, perhaps more than ever, are of vital interest to the membership as a whole. In my delegation's view the credibility of the multilateral system and that of the Council are inextricably linked. The Council's standing ultimately will depend not on how it conducts its business but on how it is constituted. Its credibility, acceptability and effectiveness will require a change in membership to reflect the reality of the modern world. It will require an end to the right of a single country to hold the power of veto over the entire membership. My delegation considers also that the time is coming when we will need to re-think anachronistic regional groupings which hinder rather than help the search for consensus that is an essential feature of this unique organization.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): Looking back on the activities of the Security Council during the past year, since the terrorist attacks on 11 September, we think that in general the Council has functioned well in carrying out its tasks in the maintenance of international peace and security. The best example is its in counter-terrorism, where the Council enjoyed the positive cooperation of non-members. I am also pleased to note that, in the case of Afghanistan, steady progress has been made in the area of reconstruction, with the cooperation of donor countries, and in restoring security, also with the support of members as well as non-member countries. I highly appreciate the fact that the Council, while maintaining its unity, has tackled such complicated issues as the situation in the Middle East and the International Criminal Court.

I would like to welcome the improvements that have been made in the working methods of the Council. I am particularly pleased that this year's report of the Security Council reflects the Council's efforts to respond to the criticisms expressed by non-

members of the Council during the debate on this item in the General Assembly last year. However, I would like to make two suggestions for further improvement.

First, I welcome the efforts of the Council to enhance participation of non-members by, for example, convening frequent open meetings and meetings with troop-contributing countries. However, the new mechanism for convening joint meetings between Council members and troop-contributing countries, which was introduced at the beginning of this year, still lacks clarity as to how it actually works. I would like to request the Council to make further improvements on this matter. It is the view of the Government of Japan that the effective functioning of a peacekeeping operation requires the involvement of not only those countries which provide military and police personnel but also those which supply civilian personnel or which make major financial contributions. We should always bear in mind that the smooth conduct of a peacekeeping operation is possible only with the appropriate involvement of those countries.

My second suggestion relates to Security Council missions. I understand that missions dispatched by the Security Council can play an important role in determining how the United Nations should be engaged in efforts to settle a regional conflict. However, from the viewpoint of cost-effectiveness, I think it is necessary that the costs, and the criteria for deciding when and where to dispatch a mission, as well as its composition, be made transparent. For instance, a clear explanation should be given to non-members why the Council has deemed it necessary to send a mission to Kosovo three years in succession.

I welcome the Council's voluntary efforts to improve its working methods, although I find it regrettable that discussion among Council members has been conducted on the premise that the existing size and composition will be maintained. The challenges to international peace and security are rapidly changing, both quantitatively and qualitatively, while the present system for maintaining international peace and security is led by the five States that were entrusted with that responsibility at the time when the United Nations was established, more than half a century ago. It thus makes us wonder whether the present system is the most suitable option for securing the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council. As I have already mentioned, if we look back on its activities during the past year, we can see that the Council now requires knowledge and expertise in an ever-wider range of fields. Its counter-terrorism efforts, for example, involve areas of expertise ranging from public security to international financing. To ensure the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Security Council, the cooperation of all Member States is, likewise, required in a broad range of areas.

Having said this, in order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, I have to stress that I have no doubt — there is no question — that the present five permanent members have both the will and the adequate capacity to contribute to world peace and security and that they have discharged that responsibility well. In this new era, however, I must seriously ask: is it not important that other countries that have strong will and adequate capacity equal to those of the five permanent members also be actively engaged in contributing to world peace and stability, thereby further enhancing the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council?

Furthermore, with the admission of Switzerland and Timor-Leste, there are no fewer than 191 States Member of the United Nations. From the viewpoint of its representativeness, how can we keep the Council at its present size and composition, which is the same as it was nearly 40 years ago, when there were only 118 Member States? It is, of course, essential that the Council's efficiency be maintained. However, I think it is increasingly necessary to expand the Council, while paying due attention to ensuring that its effectiveness will not be sacrificed.

I believe that the views I have just expressed are shared by most of the United Nations membership. The fact that 80 countries referred to the need to reform the Security Council during the general debate last month supports this belief. Also, within the broader framework of strengthening the United Nations, we must bear in mind that Security Council reform remains one of the most important items on the United Nations agenda. As Secretary-General Kofi Annan put it in his report on that issue, "no reform of the United Nations would be complete without reform of the Security Council" (*A/57/387, para. 20*).

In his statement at the close of the fifty-sixth session, the then President of the Assembly, Mr. Han Seung-soo, mentioned that in the past year the discussion of Security Council reform had not seen much change (*see A/56/PV.112, p.3*). Japan shares the

frustration that many countries are now feeling. Because the United Nations has had to devote itself to the fight against terrorism over the past year, we have been unable to build upon the momentum that had been generated at the Millennium Summit the previous year. It is thus all the more important that we revitalize our discussion now. In noting that the debate on reform will enter its tenth year next year, Prime Minister Koizumi avowed in his statement in this Hall in September (*see A/57/PV.4*) that Japan intends to work hard to achieve progress on Security Council reform.

My delegation believes that, as the first practical step towards concluding a comprehensive reform package, our discussions at the meetings of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform should now focus on such questions as the number of seats on an enlarged Council. Based on my delegation's experience last year, we cannot expect to make progress by repeating our discussion of existing papers. We thus look forward to the positive engagement by the Bureau of the Working Group, under the leadership of the President of the Assembly, Mr. Jan Kavan.

As we continue with this task, we also think that it will be helpful to provide opportunities to consider the issue from various angles, both inside and outside the United Nations, and with wider participation by both Government officials and non-governmental actors. In the event that concrete progress towards Security Council reform is not achieved, even after 10 years of deliberations on this issue, it might be worthwhile to consider measures for moving the discussion forward by, for example, holding meetings with representatives of Member States at the political level.

In the Millennium Declaration, heads of State or Government committed themselves to comprehensive reform of the Security Council. It is up to us to continue our efforts towards that end. Japan reaffirms its determination to do just that and is ready to cooperate with other Member States to realize our common objective, Security Council reform.

Mr. Nambiar (India): At the outset, on behalf of my delegation, I must express India's absolute and unequivocal condemnation of the senseless and heinous terrorist act recently perpetrated in Bali, Indonesia, which resulted in the tragic death of so many innocent civilians. We convey our profound condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia, as well as to the families of the victims of this tragic incident. We reaffirm our determination to work to the full with the international community in united efforts to confront the terrible menace of international terrorism.

Please allow me to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou, President of the Security Council, for his introduction of the report of the Council (A/57/2 and Corr.1). I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Angola, Chile, Germany, Pakistan and Spain on their election to the Security Council.

An analysis of the organic instrument that constitutes the bedrock of the United Nations, namely the Charter, shows that the exercise of the primary responsibility of the Security Council is linked to the consideration of its reports by the General Assembly. Article 24, paragraph 3 and Article 15 of the Charter require the Security Council to submit and the General Assembly to receive and consider annual and special reports. The Security Council's submission of its annual report to the General Assembly for consideration establishes a modicum of accountability in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

It is, therefore, gratifying to note that the report of the Security Council this year represents a fresh approach to the very issues raised in this Assembly on the accountability and transparency of the Council in its functioning as an organ of the United Nations. The new format of the report and, more important, the attempt at reform leading to greater transparency and consultation with non-members on major issues, are important steps in the right direction.

In that context, I wish to place on record our appreciation for the proactive role played by Singapore, under the very able guidance of Ambassador Mahbubani, in ensuring that many of the ideas raised in the General Assembly for improvement in the functioning of the Security Council are being implemented. Admittedly, no effort of one single member can be successful without the cooperation of the other members. All the current members of the Security Council have undoubtedly contributed towards initiating the changes in the Council, and we wish to congratulate each of them on their effort. I wish to also thank the Secretariat for bringing out a much shorter, more concise and better focused report on the work of the Security Council.

Document S/PV.4616, which contains the provisional verbatim record of the Security Council's meeting held to consider the draft report of the Council to the General Assembly, provides a valuable insight into the effort and cooperation that went into the reforms sought to be introduced in the working of the Council. Ambassador Mahbubani, on the basis of his unique insight from within, has described the Security Council as one of the most conservative institutions in the world today. Reforms are not easily introduced into a body that has remained unchanged in core composition since its inception more than 50 years ago. Yet it is important that the Council also heed the calls for reform in an Organization that has initiated reform measures in all its other major organs.

We fully agree with Ambassador Mahbubani when he advocates the need for formalizing the system of drawing names to determine the speakers' list for public meetings. There is surely a method in the madness here, but we have yet to discern it. Standardization of the nomenclature of the different types of meetings of the Council would be another useful action. A perusal of document S/2002/603, a note by the President of the Security Council on procedural developments in the Council in 2001, indicates the multifarious forms of meetings, orders of speakers and innovations within them that the Council adopted during that period of time.

We fully appreciate the point brought out by Ambassador Levitte of France in his intervention at the Security Council meeting on the report that the Council has moved from a period of hibernation to a period of rapid development (*see S/PV.4616, p. 7*). In 2001, the Council held 192 formal meetings, the highest in a one-year period since its inception. Of greater importance is the fact that 159 of those meetings were public, the fourth highest number of public meetings in a year in the Council's history. That is a good beginning towards transparency.

We favour more open meetings, allowing the participation of non-members in the debates, thereby enabling the views of the wider comity of nations to be heard and taken into account in the Council's consideration of vital issues of global import. Better organization in the form of advance intimation of the monthly programme of work, information posted on the Council's United Nations web site and on the web sites of the Missions of Member States holding the presidency of the Council for a particular month, and wrap-up sessions are all positive developments in the move towards transparency in the Council's functioning.

Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom has spoken of the need to assess the quality, and not just the quantity, of the Council's work. We are in agreement with that observation. The Council moved quickly and decisively in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks to adopt resolutions 1363 (2001) and 1368 (2001) and the landmark resolution 1373 (2001), as well as the sanctions against the Taliban under the earlier resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1333 (2000). In January 2002, the Council adopted its resolution 1390 (2002) to respond to the threat posed by the Taliban and Al Qaeda. It established the Counter-Terrorism Committee, which has begun its work with the spirit and dynamism that the situation demands. The Council's active intervention in establishing the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and coordinating the role of peacekeepers in various conflict situations in Africa and elsewhere have proved valuable in dousing the fires raging in many of those areas.

Some of the Council's actions continue to require greater clarity, equity and sense of purpose. For instance, the role of the Council in running the oil-for-food programme for Iraq, under which Council members decide which contracts to approve and which to put on hold, has led to a situation where 866 contracts worth $2.7 billion have been put on hold as of 4 October 2002, without any effective or independent avenue to improve the situation. The reasons why the shortfalls in Iraqi oil exports have risen, leading to approximately $2.56 billion of humanitarian goods being placed on hold, have to be examined and gone into with a sense of urgency and compassion for the people of Iraq.

While the efforts at reform, initiated primarily by non-Council members to introduce greater transparency and accountability in the Council's functioning, have been an important step in the right direction, the process of reform should in no way be considered as having been completed or fully accomplished. We would urge the Security Council to make transparency an essential feature of its functioning. A major effort should go towards making closed meetings an exception. We agree wholeheartedly with Ambassador Greenstock that virtually all Council meetings, with the exception of

those involving negotiation of texts and those on issues that require confidentiality, could be kept open.

It is quite natural that, given the profusion of conflicts arising in the aftermath of the cold war, the Council would have overextended itself in its efforts to contribute to the resolution of those situations. While it is the Council's primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, it is necessary to realize the practical and realistic limitations of involvement in all situations, particularly those that are best contained through the efforts of the parties involved. Here again, we agree with Ambassador Greenstock when he says that there are some issues that the Council cannot resolve, and that, in his belief, avoiding the Council is, empirically, the right way to go.

We also appreciate the spirit behind which efforts have been made under what has now come to be known as the Arria formula to introduce greater informal interactions between the Council and the representatives of organizations that could provide valuable inputs into the Council's workings. A notable example of the utility of Arria-formula meetings, referred to by the President of the Security Council in his note on transparency in the Council, is the meeting held on 6 March 2001 with the Secretary-General of NATO. Arria-formula meetings have also been utilized by presidencies to facilitate meetings of Council members with representatives of non-governmental organizations and civil society, including academics. That, on the face of it, is a desirable trend when it involves mainly social and economic issues that could have an impact on the Council's overall assessment of a situation. However, when it comes to dealing with complicated and long-standing political issues with the concomitant sensitivity and controversial implications, the Council would be well advised to exercise greater circumspection.

It is our considered view — and a view which I am certain many other members share — that in an effort to increase transparency, the Arria formula should not, in fact, introduce subjectivity and controversy that could ultimately prove more injurious than therapeutic to the issue it ostensibly seeks to resolve. Nor should it prove divisive within the Council membership. We would recommend that strong rules governing the issues on which such meetings may be called, the choice of parties involved in the briefing and the expression of the views of Member States, if any, be framed before any such initiative is undertaken in the future. This would be a genuine effort towards transparency. Otherwise, the question of why Arria-formula meetings are not held on issues in which Council members are themselves involved would indeed become a vexed one.

Beyond the flaws in the reporting procedures and in the meetings behind closed doors, there is a deeper subterranean fault line, a malady which points to the loss of moral vision and of the democratic ethos of representation in the Security Council. Many a problem confronts us today because of the way the Security Council is structured. The structure and composition of the Council are demonstrably out of touch with the realities on the ground and are no longer capable of meeting the aspirations and expectations of the membership and of the international community at large.

The solution lies in reforming and restructuring the Council comprehensively. Much has been said and written on this subject, and consensus continues to elude us in the deliberations of the Open-ended Working Group. But on one point there is general agreement: the Security Council, as it is composed today, is unrepresentative and anachronistic, and in no way reflects a world that has changed dramatically in the more than 50 years since San Francisco. That the developing countries, which constitute the vast majority of the general membership of the United Nations, find no place in the category of permanent members and are generally inadequately represented in the non-permanent category, serves only to further highlight the unrepresentative and unbalanced nature of a body that, by definition, is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, but which, in practical fact, is ill-equipped to do so to the satisfaction of the Members of the Organization. The Council's actions cannot be seen to command a legitimacy which its own composition and working methods do not possess.

There is little disagreement among Member States that the Council requires reform to better reflect current global realities; reform that imparts balance, representativeness and legitimacy to the Council and reflects contemporary reality; reform that is not piecemeal or partial — which would only serve to perpetuate the unrepresentative character of the Council and erode its credibility even further; reform that is comprehensive, includes expansion of the

Council's membership in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories and improves its working methods; and reform of its decision-making processes. Any reform that does not contain these core elements would, in our opinion, be no reform.

We have had occasion to outline India's position on Security Council restructuring on several occasions in the past, and we shall refrain from doing so in detail now. However, we would like to caution against the temptation to resort to piecemeal and partial solutions. After toiling for nine years, if we were to agree to an expansion of the Council in the non-permanent category alone, or if we were to make cosmetic changes in its working methods, we would be doing a major disservice, not only to ourselves but to the Organization as a whole. Expansion is needed in both categories of Council membership, and if an attempt to do otherwise is made, we would be not only shying away from the main issues that confront us but also perpetuating an international system characterized by inequity.

Turning to the Working Group, we note that there have been many fewer sessions and meetings this year compared to the past, reflecting the present state of ennui among member States. There has been progress, though, in the Council's working practices. Particularly noteworthy in this connection is the stepped-up interaction between the Council and the troop-contributing countries, which we would like to see as an ongoing, expanding and fruitful interaction in the years to come. India remains committed to evolution in this respect.

We have deliberately confined ourselves to outlining very briefly the fundamental precepts on which we believe the reform and expansion of the Security Council should be structured. My delegation will participate in and contribute to the consideration of specific issues when the Working Group begins a detailed discussion of them next year. Suffice it to say that India remains committed to implementing the call of world leaders in the Millennium Declaration to achieve comprehensive reform of the Council in all its aspects and that we see the Working Group as the legitimate instrument with which to do so. We welcome all constructive proposals to carry our work forward, and would be happy to cooperate with the Bureau and all other members of the Open-ended Working Group towards that end.

We also wish to place on record our reservations concerning the need for the Security Council to spend so much time on thematic issues such as women and armed conflict, children and armed conflict and the protection of civilians in armed conflict, all of which pertain to the management of conflict and are therefore outside the Council's mandate. This transgression into areas allocated to other United Nations bodies competent to handle many of these thematic issues could be condoned if the discussions added value. Unfortunately, they add nothing to either the norms set by international law or to its practice.

In conclusion, I wish to state that the process of introducing reform and change into the Council's functioning is both noteworthy and laudable. While welcoming them, we also look forward to the continuation of this process. The Security Council should not be seen as an isolated island of exclusion in a democratic polity. The attempts at reform and greater participation have to be seen in this light.

Mr. Ngo Duc Thang (Viet Nam): At the outset, I wish to join other speakers in expressing our heartfelt condolences to the Government of Indonesia and to the relatives of all of the victims of the brutal terrorist attack that took place in Bali on Saturday. We condemn the attack in the strongest terms.

The delegation of Viet Nam attaches great importance to the agenda items under consideration: the Security Council's work and its reform. I wish to compliment Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani and his staff for their part in compiling the concise and insightful report (A/57/2 and Corr.1) that covers the work of the Security Council for the period from 16 June 2001 to 31 July 2002. Given the number of issues in the report, my delegation would like to make some observations on several topics which we consider to be of vital importance.

We hold the view that the work of the Security Council has brought about certain positive results in maintaining peace and security in Timor-Leste, Afghanistan, parts of Africa and the Balkans, and especially in assuming major new responsibilities in combating global terrorism after the tragic events of 11 September 2001. Immediately after that terrorist attack, the Security Council adopted its resolution 1373 (2001) and set up the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) charged with monitoring the implementation of that resolution. The CTC embarked on its work seriously,

quickly providing guidance to Member States on how they should report on steps taken to implement the resolution.

We appreciate the attention paid by the United Nations system in general and the Security Council in particular to various aspects of the Afghan crisis. The Council has greatly contributed to restoring peace in the country and to helping the Afghans to form a broad-based and representative Government and to start their national reconstruction after more than two decades of war, terror, suffering and misery.

The declaration of independence of Timor-Leste on 20 May 2002 is another real success story for the United Nations, in which the work of the Security Council must be commended as well.

However, while applauding the encouraging results of the Council's work, we cannot fail but mention the protracted Middle East crisis. Despite the attention paid by the Council to the ongoing crisis during the past year, it is regrettable that the continued aggressive policy of the Israeli Government on one hand and the lack of consistent measures by the Security Council on the other did not allow for the implementation of several Security Council resolutions on the issue. As a result, the situation in the region remains volatile, and the prospect of lasting peace is ever more remote. In this connection, my delegation believes that it is necessary for every State Member of the United Nations to abide by the Council's resolutions, thereby leaving no impression of double standard in the Council's work.

With respect to the Council's work, we are pleased to note that the Council has made a number of useful changes in its methods of work, such as an increase in the number of open meetings; briefings provided at the end of the monthly Council presidency; consultations with troop-contributing countries; and debates open to non-members of the Council. Together with the Council's interactive meetings with representatives of the Secretary-General, his special envoys and the Secretary-General himself, as well as thematic debates and wrap-up discussions on the work of the Security Council, all these practices can help enhance transparency and accountability in the Council's work and make that organ more effective and democratic.

We welcome further measures enabling non-members of the Council to participate more actively in the discussion of the most important issues, for it is our conviction that this will help the Council better to equip itself to deal with crises when they occur in future.

My delegation joins with other speakers to call on the Council to make a critical evaluation of the effectiveness of sanctions imposed on Member States, which have caused untold suffering to innocent people, particularly women and children. We believe that sanctions are outdated and should never be used indefinitely. In this regard, we welcome the Council's decision to lift the embargo imposed on the Sudan and call it to do the same in the case of Iraq.

My country has always paid special interest to the reform of the Security Council, as it forms the cornerstone of the overall process of United Nations reform. Therefore, we wish to reiterate our position that there is a need to accelerate this urgent task, as the lack of tangible progress in fundamental areas of reform, despite nine years of discussion, has no doubt been frustrating. It is true that the issues are of a complex and sensitive nature, which makes the task of reaching agreement a formidable challenge. But the United Nations cannot afford to fail in this important task, or the credibility of the Organization as a whole will be put at risk. My delegation reiterates its support for the view that more vigorous efforts should be made by all countries to move forward the process of reforming the Security Council, as expressed in the Millennium Declaration.

Viet Nam believes that reform of the Security Council must be comprehensive and that it should be pursued in the context of strengthening the authority of the General Assembly, be based on transparency and on democratic principles, and be undertaken in full conformity with its intrinsic purpose. The reform must reflect the three basic components of the process: an increase in the Council's membership; decision-making process; and working methods. We believe that it is urgent and necessary to correct the current imbalance by ensuring more balanced and equitable geographical representation and by increasing the participation of developing countries, emerging regional players and centres of economic power.

It is important to ensure that the interest of all nations are sufficiently reflected in the composition of the Security Council, in line with the complexity of a

world that has seen great development, both quantitative and qualitative, in international relations.

We support the idea of enlarging both categories of members — permanent and non-permanent — and believe that due recognition should be given to improving the Council's working procedures and decision-making process, so that it can become more democratic, representative, and transparent and be better prepared to face the security challenges of the twenty-first century.

Let me conclude my statement by congratulating Germany, Spain, Pakistan, Angola and Chile on their election to the Security Council. I hope that the new non-permanent members will help enhance the openness, transparency and representativeness of the Council to the full extent permissible under the current structure of this main body of the United Nations. I also wish to express our gratitude to the outgoing members for their contribution to the promotion of peace and international security.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Let me begin by expressing my deep condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia, as well as to Australia and to the other countries who lost their nationals in the recent terrorist tragedy in Bali. We hope that the perpetrators of this atrocity will be brought to justice soon.

We wish also to express our appreciation to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, the Permanent Representative of Cameroon and the current President of the Security Council, for introducing the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly. May I take this opportunity to thank those delegations which have congratulated Pakistan on its election to the Council for the next two years.

I would in turn wish to felicitate Angola, Chile, Spain and Germany on their election to the Council last month. We look forward to working closely with them as well as with other Council members in our common pursuit of global peace and security. I would wish to pay special tribute to the outgoing members of the Council for the important contributions to its work.

This year, the Security Council's annual report, submitted in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter, has been presented in a new, improved format with an analytical summary. We appreciate the conscious effort made to reduce the size of the report and to avoid repetition, as well as the active role played by the Council's non-permanent members in making these improvements.

First, I would note the Council's visible successes. The Council's supervision and support for a number of peacekeeping operations — especially those in Timor-Leste and Sierra Leone — have been the most visible manifestations of collective security, as visualized in the United Nations Charter. Both the Security Council and the United Nations have learnt appropriate lessons from the past. We hope that in future, too, the Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries will work together to ensure the effective realization of the larger purposes of the re-establishment and preservation of peace and security in so many troubled parts of the world.

During the past year, the Security Council made a significant contribution to combating international terrorism, including the adoption of provisions to arrest the financing and support of terrorism through the Counter-Terrorism Committee. The Security Council also played a role in shaping the events in Afghanistan. Yet, all these endeavours to build peace and restore hope in Afghanistan remain under threat so long as the international community, including the Security Council, is unable to consolidate peace and security and establish President Karzai's authority in all parts and regions of Afghanistan. To this end, Pakistan has continued to urge the Security Council and the Secretary-General, as well as the major Powers, to authorize the deployment of additional international forces, especially in regional centres. It is imperative for the Council to take early and resolute action for this purpose.

The Middle East crisis and the prolonged tragedy of the Palestinian people have continued to challenge the credibility of the Security Council. The Council achieved a high point when it adopted resolution 1397 (2002), creating the framework for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of the principle of land for peace. Since then, however, confronted by repeated Israeli military incursions, punitive measures, the economic strangulation of the Palestinian people and spiralling violence in the occupied territories, the Security Council's deliberations have become almost a parody of the role which the Charter had perceived for it.

Among the most glaring of the Council's failures has been its inability even to reverse the threat to peace in South Asia, even though the India-Pakistan issue and the underlying dispute over Jammu and Kashmir remain on the Council's agenda. With one million troops deployed by India along Pakistan's eastern border and the Line of Control in Kashmir; with repeated threats from New Delhi of war and the use of force against Pakistan; and with artillery and small arms exchanges a daily feature on the Line of Control, there could be no clearer and more tangible threat to international peace and security, even if one were to discount the danger arising from the fact that the two antagonists possess nuclear weapons.

The United Nations Charter requires that, in the event of a breach of the peace or a threat of use of force, the Security Council shall address the situation with a view to restoring such peace and security. The Council's responsibility to prevent a conflict in South Asia, which has been described as "the most has dangerous place in the world", is clear and present. Yet, although the Council's attention was drawn to the crisis repeatedly during the year, including by the Secretary-General himself, the Council remained impassive. Not even an Arria-formula meeting could be convened for this purpose. War may have been temporarily averted by the active diplomacy of some major Powers, but neither the Council nor the international community can afford to substitute conflict management for conflict resolution.

During the Security Council's debate on this report, Ambassador Mahbubani of Singapore referred to the Council's "orphans" — peoples on whose behalf the Council had undertaken to act but never did. Most prominent among these orphans are the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The Council has adopted a series of resolutions defining a clear framework for the political disposition of Kashmir in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the Kashmiri people, under a United Nations-supervised plebiscite. These resolutions remain to be implemented.

The Council should not be oblivious to the erosion of its credibility flowing from non-compliance with its resolutions. The Council has been convincingly reminded of this in recent weeks. Ineffectiveness and weakness flow not only from an absence of determination and will to secure compliance with certain resolutions of the Security Council; they are also manifested by the acceptance and application of double standards and discrimination. The Council's resolutions represent international legality; they must be respected comprehensively by all sides, in all regions and in all circumstances.

The Council's failures have not been due mainly to the shortcomings in its procedures or, indeed, in its structures. These failures are principally due to a shortfall in the commitment of Member States, individually and collectively, to conduct their policies and uphold their legitimate national interests strictly in accordance with the United Nations Charter and its principles.

We are convinced that the departures from principle witnessed in the Council would become more isolated and infrequent if the Council were to become a more representative body. Pakistan therefore continues to support the expansion of the Security Council's membership. At the same time, we will continue to resist proliferation of the centres of privilege represented by the unfortunate institution of the five permanent members of the Security Council and their veto power. It is clear that, for the present, consensus within the General Assembly would favour the expansion of only the non-permanent, elected members of the Council.

There have been prolonged endeavours to improve the Council's working methods, transparency and effectiveness. We appreciate these. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation that the improved practices should now be codified.

We also welcome the recent efforts to make the Council's work more transparent and inclusive for the rest of the United Nations membership. Rule 48 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure specifically states: "Unless it decides otherwise, the Security Council shall meet in public." Despite the increase in the number of public debates and the consultations with troop-contributing countries, the Council's decisions continue to be made mostly behind closed doors. In a statement to the Council in 1994, the representative of one of the five permanent members described such informal consultations in the following words:

> "Informal meetings are not even real Council meetings at all; they have no official existence, and are assigned no number. Yet it is in these meetings that all the Council's work is carried out." (*S/PV.3483, p. 2*)

The argument that there is a trade-off between efficiency and transparency is a false one, we believe. Indeed, it can be argued more cogently that the Wilsonian principle of "open covenants, openly arrived at" is the one that will enhance the effectiveness of the Council and the consistent application of the United Nations Charter's principles. In the circumstances, we believe that the General Assembly, the most universal and representative organ of the United Nations, should recommend the following measures to the Security Council.

First, the improvements made in the Council's working methods should be codified, as recommended by the Secretary-General. Secondly, rule 48 of Security Council's provisional rules of procedure should be adhered to in letter and in spirit. Thirdly, a compendium should be drawn up of those Security Council resolutions whose implementation remains outstanding. Fourthly, the Security Council, in cooperation with the Secretary-General, should undertake a thorough consideration of how the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter can be fully utilized to promote the pacific settlement of conflicts and disputes.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.